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Copies of your letters can also be sent to Ms. Bouvier, who will forward them to the Cochabamba church workers to express your support to them. For further information, write:

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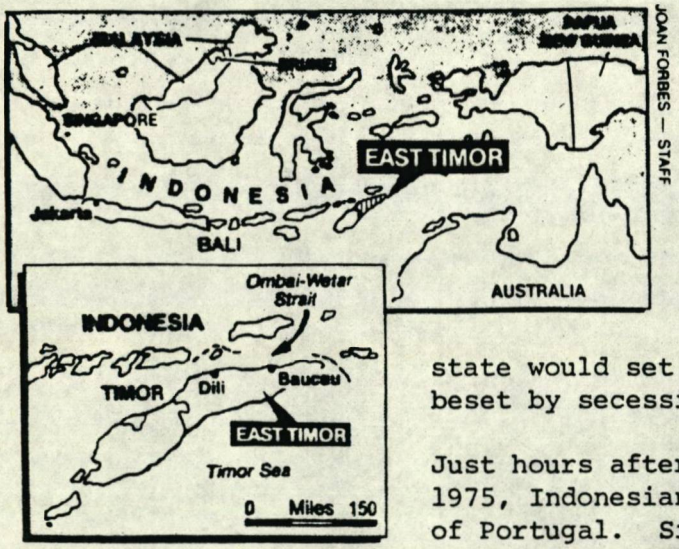
8. PRESIDENT REAGAN FINALLY DISCUSSES EAST TIMOR TRAGEDY WITH GEN. SUHARTO

"The world should open its eyes" to the denial of justice and human rights in East Timor, declared Msgr. Martinho da Costa Lopes in a mid-April interview. A native of East Timor, he served as the apostolic administrator of Dili, East Timor, from 1977 to 1983. He then went into exile after the Indonesian government considered him "persona non grata" for openly denouncing atrocities committed by government soldiers trying to put down the East Timorese independence movement.

After begging U.S. Catholic bishops and faithful to support his people's struggle, Msgr. Costa Lopes wrote to President Reagan asking that during his April 28-May 1 visit to Indonesia he speak directly to President Gen. Suharto about the East Timorese, who "are suffering ethnic, cultural and psychological genocide" at the hands of the Indonesians. He also wrote that East Timor, which has already lost "perhaps a third of its population as a direct result of the Indonesian invasion and occupation" since 1985, is now being subjected to a forced birth control program. He urged Reagan to have Suharto stop the "harassment and coercion" of the Catholic Church in East Timor.



One Catholic Church source said at least 100,000 of the 650,000 East Timorese have been killed in the past ten years through direct attacks or starvation suffered at the hands of the Indonesian forces. More than half of the East Timorese are Catholic yet 90% of the 170 million Indonesians on 13,500 islands are Moslems. Analysts say Suharto's government fears a successful independent government in a small state would set an example for other parts of the country beset by secessionist rumblings.

Just hours after U.S. President Ford visited Jakarta in 1975, Indonesian forces invaded the recently freed colony of Portugal. Since the U.S. considers Indonesia an important ally with the Ombai-Wetar Strait north of East Timor being the second most important strait in the world to U.S. defense interests, the U.S. granted nearly $2 billion in military and economic aid in the past ten years to Suharto's government. In 1985 alone, Indonesia received $114.4 million in economic assistance and $34.3 million in military aid.

Since his repressive rule, begun with a coup in 1966, it has been estimated that Suharto and his cronies have accumulated $2 to $3 billion. Sensitive to unfavorable press coverage, the Suharto government controls all radio and television

coverage, and closed 11 major newspapers in the 1970s. The foreign press is also attacked: five Australian TV newsmen trying to cover the 1975 invasion of East Timor were murdered by security forces. Just prior to Reagan's recent visit, three U.S. and eleven Australian journalists were denied visas to cover the trip, apparently for reporting on Indonesian government corruption and military matters. Said one missionary, "Suharto is very careful about what kind of people criticize" his government. He added that he feared he or his order would not be allowed to return to Indonesia if he were identified.

On April 29 a group of 125 U.S. House members and 23 Senators sent a letter to President Reagan asking him to raise the problem of human rights violations in East Timor with Suharto. In the May 2 issue of The Washington Post, Lou Cannon and William Branigin reported that U.S. Secretary of State, George Shultz, said issues of human rights and press freedom were discussed in the Reagan-Suharto meeting. Shultz declined to give details other than to say that Indonesia claimed improvement in the human rights situation in East Timor.

Mr. Arnold Kohen, who has followed the East Timor issue for nearly a decade and who is a consultant for the human rights organization Asia Watch, said that while much more needs to be done to stop the numerous abuses in East Timor, it was most encouraging to read that President Reagan finally discussed the issue after years of effort by church and political people to call attention to it.

SUGGESTED ACTION: Write your Representative urging him/her to support the Tony Hall resolution, and write your Senators also asking them to support the Carl Levin resolution that basically calls on the U.S. government to continue focusing on the human rights abuses in East Timor.

For further information, contact: Asia Watch
739 Eighth Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003 (202) 546-9336

9. THE WOMEN'S BUDGET

"The U.S. government's budget is a political document that reveals the distribution of this country's massive federal resources. Recent U.S. budgets have highlighted the historical inequities in the allocation of these resources." That is the opening statement of the Introduction to THE WOMEN'S BUDGET, a report from the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) published last year.

"This severe maldistribution of resources is, of course, not only a phenomenon in the United States. A global crisis exists, in which hundreds of millions of people live in poverty without adequate food, sanitation, education, and with no opportunity for productive labor. At the same time, multinational corporate profits increase and the latest in military technology is spread around the world," the report continues. "Every minute 30 children die for want of food and inexpensive vaccines; during the same 60 seconds the world's military budget absorbe $1.3 million of the public treasury."

U.S. military expenditures absorb the major sector of tax revenues (excluding Social Security). By 1986, the Pentagon will be spending nearly $1 billion a day. But the report points out that Bureau of Labor statistics data show that $1 billion